

# EXHIBIT 1

Dear Judge Hernandez,

My name is Daniel Baker, and I want to take this time to possibly give you a chance at getting to know me, my mind, my spirit and my character. This is a tall task, trying to articulate how I feel into words and keeping it under a certain amount of pages but I will do my best.

For starters, I want to take this time to let you know just how deeply regretful I am of all of this. I don't know if my pills caused this tragedy, but it sickens me to think they could have. If the court is to find that my actions caused this tragedy for Mr. Benson and his friends and family, I am willing and ready to take full responsibility of any punishment that may come my way.

But I want to try get you to know me, too. I am a Portland native -- born and raised here. I grew up with basketball dreams as many young boys of African-American descent have. It was hard for me growing up in a neighborhood where the only successful black people you see are on T.V. dribbling a ball and or singing rap lyrics. I did, though, see that as my only way out, my only way at escaping an almost inevitable path of drugs and violence.

My neighborhood was most reputably known for "The woodlawn park bloods" and although I was at the park they called home every single day, I somehow managed to stay out of the gang life. I started running track at the age of 5 and I quickly fell in love with sports, playing organized basketball and football starting in 6th grade. Basketball turned into more than a hobby for me. I started dedicating every minute that I had to the sport and dreamed of playing in college and possibly the NBA. By freshman year of high school, it seemed like an attainable goal to me as I was playing on the JV team and even got some minutes in for the Varsity team.

Throughout high school, I battled having ADHD and was prescribed Adderall XR 30mg that I was to take every single morning. That slowly but surely made me more and more depressed and to cope with all of that I started smoking marijuana to "even it out". I became dependent; by senior year I was smoking before games and somehow managed to make 2nd team All-State.

I was very excited about playing basketball in college and I really thought it was going to happen. But I injured my knee my second week of practice. That was a devastating blow to me, and I felt like my world came crashing down. I was in so much pain with my knee and started getting pills from a friend to cope with the pain that I was in because I wasn't able to get prescription pills. Sadly, that's what started a long journey of dependency, dependence of altering my mind and my body with drugs. I became addicted and started finding other pills that I could take as I put the hopes and dreams of playing in the NBA behind me.

Depressed and out of options because I didn't have a plan B so to speak, I started selling pills to make money. Xanax. I was taking three Xanax pills every single day for 5-7 years

straight. I never stopped, I never took a break, I never thought of a different route. I was numb. I was losing friends back-to-back. They were all dying around me due to gang violence, and I started dealing with the troubles of adulthood.

I moved out of my parents' house and was in my own apartment figuring life out. I lost 10-15 friends to gang violence during those times so the Xanax pills really helped me deal with or numb the pain that I was feeling. I look back at the way my life unfolded and have so many regrets, but I will say this time in jail has given me a new sense of clarity.

If I am able to get out and get back on the streets I want to first take as many counseling sessions and drug courses as I can because I know that this problem is rooted deep inside me. I want to take what has happened to me as a learning lesson that I can teach to the youth. I want to be a motivational speaker and hopefully help young boys that were once in my position with guidance and help on dealing with the rollercoaster of becoming a man. I feel like that is my duty, to help stop the cycle of young black men coming to jail or, worse, losing their life due to drugs.

I feel responsible for the next generation's success because if I don't share what I now know and help them, I am only contributing to the problem. I pray that I am able to touch and change the lives of many people with my story. I want to get out and become a father, live a healthy and positive lifestyle, and make the changes that I know are possible.

I can't do anything to change the past, but I can change my future and that starts now. It has to start now. I need to get help and I am more than willing to do so and complete all and any drug classes that can help me learn about battling addiction so that I can later spread the word. I hope you see that I am not a bad person, I was just misguided. I was practically unconscious, a walking zombie, that had no idea of the hurt that I was causing the world. I pray that you give me this second chance to help the community, and to make amends with all those that I possibly caused harm. Thank you for your time of reading this and considering my words. I hope you give me the opportunity to make a change, a change for the better. Thank you.

- Daniel Baker